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THE SALVATION ARMY IN DINNER JACKETS¹

By Roger Watson

*'I judge no (men).....I'm exposing (them). But
 that's a different thing. The public can judge.'²*

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THE SALVATION ARMY IN DINNER JACKETS

BRIEF HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

"Of few movements can it be said with such justice and force that they are the extension of a single personality as in the case of Moral Re-Armament (MRA)."³ Frank Buchman, the founder of MRA, was a disillusioned Lutheran pastor who had an experience in England in 1908⁴ which re-vitalised his evangelical zeal. Upon hearing a woman preach on the Cross of Christ he said "I left the Chapel with a consciousness of having the complete answer for all my sins. I heard the wind of Heaven. It passed over me and through me. I walked out of that place a different man."⁵ He immediately set out to share his experience and, that afternoon, he had a talk with a young man which "ended with the young man giving himself to God."⁵

His speciality, in dealing with other people, was in taking them to the roots of their moral deficiencies and thereby showing them how God could help them to overcome their problems and lead a better life. On this theme he quoted the Scottish evangelist Henry Drummond (1851-97)⁶ with approval saying that "when he had been out with men speaking to them of the deepest things in their lives, as he went home he wanted to change his very clothes."⁷

Buchman helped many Christians back onto the good road and won many converts from atheism to Christianity. The effectiveness of his methods, documented in hundreds of cases, cannot be denied and he rapidly built up a following. In 1930 A.J. Russell recalled "sitting in a Presbyterian church in Orpington, Kent, when the minister, the Rev. J.M. Ferguson, MA, subsequently Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of England, dropped a few complementary words about a new religious movement emanating from Oxford University known as the Oxford Group, that he said was spreading rapidly through various countries including South Africa."⁸

The testing ground for Buchman's earliest experiments was Pennsylvania State College. The lessons he learned there, whereby the academic and sporting achievements of the college were significantly improved through the conversion of strategic figures, were applied to his future work in the world.

Buchman "concerned himself with the intimate details of people's lives yet encouraged them to have a global perspective."⁹ The seven years he spent in Pennsylvania State College "provided Buchman with a multitude of stories which he used for the rest of his life."¹⁰

Eventually operating outside of any established church Buchman began to formulise his work according to his own design. First came the five 'C's' of "Confidence, Confession, Conviction, Conversion, Conservation"¹¹ but later he focused on the Sermon on the Mount¹² which, he distilled to the four standards of "absolute honesty, purity, unselfishness and love"¹⁴ by drawing on the concept of a former evangelist¹³. He also believed passionately that he worked under specific and constant divine assistance which he called 'guidance'.¹⁵ This guidance could be obtained at any time but particularly in the early mornings and Buchman developed the meditative practice of the 'quiet time'.¹⁶ Beyond this, the theory underlying Buchman's Oxford Group, which became known as MRA,¹⁷ never developed in the slightest.¹⁸ Over 1900 years of persecution, martyrdom, reform, counter-reform and doctrinal development were summed up in "the four standards and guidance." The very simplicity took many unawares and former communists and re-moralised clergy¹⁹ found themselves tied up in a movement to "remake the world."²⁰ The world remains unmade and MRA remains what it always was - rampant religiosity with recourse to neither scriptural nor temporal authority.

The structure of the work of MRA changed significantly after Buchman's death in 1961. For a short time the brilliant English journalist and sportsman Peter Howard was "recognised as the international spokesman and leader of MRA."²¹ Howard died in 1965 after which time "an informal collective"²¹ or collegiate²² leadership grew up.

MODUS OPERANDI

MRA sets out its stall in varied and increasingly sophisticated ways. "It wages energetic campaigns using conferences, theatre, video, films, books and personal encounters on all continents."²³ Its operations are deliberately planned to recruit in certain areas, for example in the field of labour and trade unions, where its activities have not gone unnoticed.^{24, 25}

There are also attempts to bring specific individuals within its sphere of influence, for instance, Rajiv Gandhi, P.W. Botha, Ronald Reagan, the Pope and the Dalai Lama.²⁶

Individuals who seem interested are then challenged to measure up their lives to the four standards and, whether they believe in God or not, are invited to participate in a 'quiet time'. Part of the discipline of the 'quiet time' is to share any thoughts which come - preferably with an MRA worker. This is the practice of confession which, according to one author (while omitting that it has always been available in the Roman Catholic Church) "has come again into its rights."²⁷ Within MRA "there is no compulsory confession; but repeated confession is taken for granted amongst its members."²⁷ If confession proves fruitful, for example, by exposing moral deficiencies or by way of providing ideas for change of habit, the 'penitent' is encouraged to share his experience with a wider group which initially comprises other MRA adherents. Later however, the individual will use a polished description of this experience to attract others to MRA; singing its praises for having provided the means by which this efficacious experience was gained.

The thoughts which come in 'quiet times' are the 'guidance' of which Buchman talked. Once the individual is familiar with the technique and begins practising on a regular basis he is encouraged to check his guidance with another MRA adherent¹⁸ or, preferably, with his local MRA team. This team will usually include at least one full-time MRA worker who lives in the locality. In fact, MRA owns property in London, Newcastle, Aberdeen, Glasgow, Liverpool and Birmingham the policy being to keep "adequate premises in and around London"³⁰ with a "steady deployment to other strategic areas of the British Isles"³⁰ Full time workers travel regularly to London to consult as a central team which plans and co-ordinates the work of MRA under the direction of the Council of Management.

THE COUNCIL OF MANAGEMENT

The Council of Management aims "to see that every activity of Moral Re-Armament is planned to combine the greatest advance of the work with the most economic use of the funds."³¹ It consists of around twenty individuals³² all of whom are co-opted.

The Council meets behind closed doors and its minutes are not readily available, even to full time MRA workers. Council decisions are implemented through the central team in London, the meetings of which are normally chaired by a Council member, and its decisions are invariably implemented. Dissent is minimal and Council decisions are rarely questioned. A case of democratic centralism par excellence.

If an individual's guidance conflicts with that of the local team (which will invariably reflect the guidance of the central team) group dynamics operate effectively to help the errant individual see his mistake. Similarly, ostracism can be implemented for as long as is necessary to bring the individual into line. Friendships outside of MRA are strongly discouraged, unless they are aimed at recruitment and, therefore, the individual normally returns to the fold for fear of losing all human contact.

ANTI-CATHOLIC

It can be seen, therefore, that at the very core of its operations MRA is in conflict with Catholic teaching. It claims to be a movement of individuals receiving and interpreting God's guidance largely by their own lights. However, any movement so constituted will soon sink into the shifting sands of experiential individualism. To counter this MRA has attempted orthodoxy through group dynamics but here too it also conflicts with Catholic teaching, particularly where individual Catholics are involved either as adherents or full time workers. Ultimately, such Catholics take direction on moral, spiritual as well as social matters from a body which is largely composed of non-Catholics and, outside of the United Kingdom, of non-Christians. After observing such an attempt at a MRA meeting, Duff remarked "what warrant an Episcopalian, however pious, has to provide moral direction for a Catholic is not clear."³³

There has always been a trend towards anti-Catholicism in MRA and a large element of indifferentism. Emil Brunner spoke of "the unwillingness of the Church to repent"³⁴ for being the cause of the Reformation. He defended Luther thus: "Luther, indeed, did not want to place his own Church alongside of the Roman Church, his desire was merely to renew the one and only Church of his time from within in the spirit of the Gospel. He was no schismatic, but the Church thrust him out."³⁴

This trend can be traced through to the present day. In Geneva, bastion of the Reformation, the MRA team holds 'Escalade' parties to celebrate the defeat of a Catholic attempt to take the city.³⁵

A recent issue of the MRA newspaper New World News carried three pictures, one each of the Pope, the Dalai Lama and Bob Geldof remarking that these collectively constituted 'Signposts of hope.'³⁶

Notwithstanding the decidedly un-Catholic and, in many respects, anti-Catholic nature of MRA its influence within the Roman Catholic Church is increasing. This will be the subject of a subsequent section.

ANTI-COMMUNISM AND OPPORTUNISM

While MRA has always been careful not to describe itself as anti-Communist it was, in its earliest days and possibly up to the 1960's an effective anti-Communist force. It won many leading and influential communists, for example, Hans Bjerkholt, co-founder of the Norwegian Communist Party³⁷ and, in this light it played a significant part in the campaign in the Rhur, the industrial heart of Germany, immediately after the Second World War, to reverse the grip of Communism on the trade unions.³⁸ Buchman had no illusions about Communism saying "The choice for all men everywhere; Moral Re-Armament or Communism."³⁹

Some incisive comment by contributors has been published in MRA magazines over the years, such as this from Dr. Hans Koch, an expert in East European affairs: "But unfortunately the Communism of today is no longer a fighting Communism in shirt sleeves but the Communism of the drawing room. It does not stamp with mighty strides across the world, but goes in patent leather shoes with rubber soles. It does not have the revolutionary uniform of the dictator, but the dress-coat of the diplomat. It not only uses the threat of the atomic bomb, but also the unseen tactic of infiltration."⁴⁰ Buchman's short lived successor, Peter Howard, maintained a clarity on the aims and methodology of world communism which earned him worldwide respect and also animosity, both inside and outside of MRA. There were those inside the force who wished that Howard would tone down his message as his correspondence proves.⁴¹ Since Howard's death the moderates have won the day and it is a commonly expressed opinion within MRA that "Peter Howard

had to die to save the work."⁴²

The last clear sighted comment on communism from MRA was published as a booklet called 'Ideology and Co-existence',⁴³ which went to every home in the United Kingdom and to many millions of people around the world.⁴⁴ It is quite obvious from subsequent MRA documents and publications that the stance towards communism has altered from opposition to one of appeasement, compromise and dialogue. This reversal in attitude towards communism reached its zenith in 1986 with the publication of "An Open Letter to Mr. Gorbachov."⁴⁵ The General Secretary was praised for his 'campaign for communist moral re-armament'.⁴⁵ The author of this letter had already published a significant statement, hailed by the current leadership of MRA and presented to a Soviet diplomat on one occasion,⁴⁶ which drew parallels between Christian morality and communism. For instance, apropos morality he said "Fortunately all the world's great religions seem to agree on the nature of such a code. So do most Communist thinkers." According to him, within communism "self-criticism can be genuine and lead to a changed attitude. It is then akin to what Christians call a conviction of sin."⁴⁸

The effectiveness of MRA's former anti-Communist stance can be gauged by the fact that it once drew the fire of the Kremlin in a notable speech by George Arbatov where he said that MRA was "a universal ideology" with "the power to attract radical, revolutionary minds". It "supplants the inevitable class war by the permanent struggle between good and evil" and "in addition to building bridgeheads on each continent and training cadres who would be capable of spreading (its) ideology among the masses, has now started on its decisive task (of) total expansion."⁴⁹ Now, however, as one commentator remarked "it is clear to any casual observer that Moral Re-Armament is not the ideological force that it once was in the world; certainly not in Britain."⁵⁰

The drop in ideological profile is reflected in published comments which display the common misconception that Mr. Gorbachov and the reforms he has introduced are signs of hope for the world. For example, the recently launched MRA magazine 'For a Change' carried a piece on East/West

relations containing the comment "The unexpected 'new thinking' has come mostly from Gorbachov's side."⁵¹ Elsewhere it has been said that "Mr. Gorbachov has brought a new dimension to East-West relations" and described this as a 'positive trend'.⁵² MRA is not encouraging its youth sections to see communism as a threat but instead publishes conclusions like "what would most help the people in what we call the East is that we put our own part of the world in order - that we deal with change in our own Western world."⁵³ While the sad state of Western society cannot be under-estimated, against the background of the other comments above this recipe could cover anything from clearing up corruption in the City of London to implementing unilateral nuclear disarmament.

THE POLISH CONNECTION

MRA has links, at a personal level, with the current hierarchy of the Catholic Church in Poland.⁵⁴ At another level, frequent visits are made by MRA workers and contact maintained with representatives of Solidarity. One of these MRA workers has contributed a 'Letter from Poland' to the Catholic Herald.⁵⁵ It has been established that links are maintained between MRA and KOR (a group which probably steers the activities of Solidarity). These links are not insignificant, as one of the MRA workers explains "I know one of the founders of KOR and visit him every time I go to Poland."⁵⁶ This particular founder is a close friend of Adam Michnik,⁵⁷ the renowned Trotskyist who "makes it quite clear that the main purpose of KOR's diabolically clever strategy is to involve Catholics and even the Church in the promotion of conflict on the pretext of resistance to totalitarianism."⁵⁸ Small wonder that Michnik (who is Jewish) pays warm tribute to the part played by the Church in the struggle in Poland.⁵⁶ Despite being presented with the meticulously documented evidence of Trotskyist subversion in Poland by Henri Charles⁵⁹ the MRA workers active in Poland maintain these links. The MRA workers in Poland are in agreement with Mary Craig who has proclaimed that "Adam Michnik was the greatest voice coming out of Eastern Europe today."⁵⁷ Mary Craig has attended and addressed an MRA Youth training session on the theme of 'Poland's history, putting in context the rise of Solidarity and subsequent events'.⁶⁰

THE CHINESE CONNECTION

William Jaeger is undoubtedly the key figure in the current international work of MRA. He began his career by training as a Baptist minister but, since meeting MRA in 1932,⁶¹ has worked full-time every since. His particular area of responsibility has always been Labour and he has expounded at various times on his theories on Labour and on the class struggle.^{62 63 64} He regularly attends the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Trades Union Congress, the Labour Party Conference and the Conservative Party Conference always as a representative of the MRA front newspaper 'The Industrial Pioneer'.^{65 66} On this basis he has contributed to the Conservative Trade Union newspaper.⁶⁷

Jaeger maintains contact with a wide variety of people on the left of the political spectrum, including terrorists from the African National Congress (ANC). He always gives them a good press and claims that Oliver Tambo, whose terrorist credentials are impeccable, prefers "the way of non-violence"⁶⁸ and that Solly Smith, head of the ANC in Britain takes advice from him on his talks.⁶⁹ The reward for Jaeger's efforts was an invitation to the People's Republic of China between April 2-14, 1986.⁷⁰ On his trips to the ILO Jaeger meets with Chinese officials "three or four times a year."⁷¹ During his visit to China, Jaeger observed that *"Obviously some of the Chinese we met knew most of what had been said at our conferences and in our publications over the years."* So, clearly, the move to have an MRA delegation in China was initiated by elements within the ruling authorities in order to investigate the possibility of using MRA to further Chinese aims and objectives in the world. The invitation came by way of Zhu Xuefan, a Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress.⁷² Despite never having visited the country before, Jaeger was able to say *"A passion to modernise the country has led, under Deng's pragmatic leadership, to a breathtaking pace of change. Evidence of the reforms is everywhere, though most dramatic in rural areas."*⁷³ There is no evidence in their reports that the MRA delegation visited the rural areas. They spent twelve days in cities, with flights between them, meeting intellectuals, clergy and industrialists. The 'five banquets'⁷⁴ to which the MRA delegates were subjected obviously favourably coloured their vision of their host's country - a classic tactic. Jaeger admits that they *"were looked after with meticulous and generous care."*⁷⁵

Compare his opinion with that of someone who spent a significant time, unaccompanied, in the rural areas of China. In answer to the question "Do tourists see anything remotely resembling reality of life there?"⁷² Steven Mosher replied *"They don't, and what happens is a combination of deception and self-deception. China is not Europe....Most foreign tourists are simply not prepared when they go to China to see the reality of the country that they are visiting....But there is also deception....There are some 250 cities in China open to foreign tourists. The rest of the country is off limits. Only the best that China has to offer is shown to foreign tourists."*⁷³

The Chinese hosts returned platitudes on MRA and Jaeger concluded his report with *"it seemed to reflect a desire to find a common basis for unity and constructive action between nations that may not always see eye to eye."*⁷⁴ No mention of forced abortion policies or the undoubted supply of arms to Iran.⁷⁵ These links between MRA and the Chinese government represent more than the dead-end activities of the organisation. Apart from the publicity given to China by Jaeger, he also has considerable influence on PP Narayan, President of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). Narayan has discussed the possibility of links between the Chinese government and the ICFTU,⁷⁶ once a bastion of anti-communism. In addition, Jaeger has contributed to an MRA youth newspaper thereby influencing future generations with his infected view of China.⁷⁵

THE ZIMBABWE CONNECTION

MRA workers were very active in Rhodesia before the transition to black majority rule and the creation of Zimbabwe. Their involvement, at many levels, is well documented^{76 77} but their greatest achievement was the influence they had on Alec Smith, son of the former Rhodesian Prime Minister, and his subsequent use, as they thought, to involve the Rev. Arthur Kanodereka in MRA activities.⁷⁸

It transpires, however, that Kanodereka was probably a double agent, claiming to be an African Nationalist but in the pay of the white security services. If this claim is true, and it was made by Ken Flower, former Intelligence Chief during the transition from Smith to Mugabe,⁷⁸ then one of the key pieces of evidence currently presented by

MRA in support of its thesis of personal change leading to national change, under its influence, is actually bogus. The truth may be that MRA was used as a cover for Kanodereka's international moves.

There was an hysterical reaction from MRA when a leading British newspaper⁸⁰ reviewed Ken Flower's autobiography and included reference to his revelation that Kanodereka was used, with his consent, to provide poisoned uniforms to African Nationalist recruits. The young recruits died in the bush in "many hundreds"⁷⁹ on the way to supposed rallying points. The review was quickly answered, on the pages of the same newspaper,⁸¹ in a letter from one of MRA's Zimbabwe experts and a campaign was launched world-wide to promote the MRA view of Kanodereka.⁸²⁻⁸⁶ The allegations regarding Kanodereka also appeared in newspapers in Zimbabwe and South Africa.^{87 88} An internal report was circulated within MRA in defence of Kanodereka's memory.⁸⁹ However, all the evidence quoted came from MRA sources and even quoted Kanodereka's own words to the MRA team in support of his honesty and integrity.

The author of the report did admit, however, that "Arthur did send clothes to the 'boys'",⁸⁹ and also, most revealingly, says that "*any black nationalist would accept money from white sources willing to provide it.*"⁸⁹ The latter point is most significant as it has been revealed by someone who met Kanodereka in Zimbabwe and whose suspicions are "that Kanodereka was a double agent and was using MRA as a cover,"⁹⁰ that he tried to use MRA workers returning to Europe to carry money in envelopes addressed to a Swiss Bank. This practice is not uncommon among Black Nationalists.⁹¹

Not all of those in the MRA team concerned with Africa are so convinced of Kanodereka's purity. At least two people have intimated that, while Kanodereka was travelling through Europe and America speaking on MRA platforms, he made significant changes in his speeches depending upon the audience he was addressing.⁹⁰ It is also noteworthy that Kanodereka made trips to Zambia and Mozambique (where the Zimbabwe nationalists operated in exile) at the height of the troubles. It has been pointed out that these moves had to be checked with the white authorities lending further weight to the theory that he was a double agent.^{89 90}

The Zimbabwean incidents are included here to illustrate the opportunistic nature and also the outright naivety of some of MRA's operations. The 'flagship' of MRA's armada of evidence regarding its work in Zimbabwe is the ghost written autobiography of Alec Smith. Doubts have been expressed to the present author about the accuracy of the description of Kanodereka's initial involvement with MRA, and the events described in the book involving a former colonial administrator and MRA adherent have been described by the subject to me as "pure fabrication."^{92 93}

MRA AND THE VATICAN

Contact between MRA workers and officials at the Vatican had been established by 1940. A senior MRA figure described his "walk in the gardens of the Villa Medici" with a Catholic priest who "represented the Swiss Abbey of St. Maurice at the Vatican."⁹⁴

Buchman made his first visit to Rome in 1947 and, at that time, several Catholics were working with him.⁹⁵ He did not seek an audience with the Pope (Pius XII) but left it to the Catholics in his group to impress upon the Holy Father the value of MRA. Apparently the Pope blessed the work.^{95 96} It was certainly Buchman's aim to attempt to "favourably influence the Church's attitude"⁹⁵ towards MRA.

After the Second World War, the efforts of MRA were directed at fulfilling Jean Monnet's vision of uniting Europe⁴⁷ and these efforts were to bring Buchman and his workers into contact with three leading Catholic statesmen, namely, Schuman of France, Adenaur of Germany and de Gasperi of Italy. MRA has made much, especially in its present work within the European Parliament, of these contacts. It is notable, however, that while Schuman wrote a foreword to the collected speeches of Buchman,⁹⁸ Adenaur did not mention him in his memoirs.⁹⁹

The sight of a Lutheran drawing the faithful to Caux⁰ naturally 'aroused suspicion' in the Holy Office.¹⁰⁰ That the Holy Office should reach conclusions which were adverse to MRA is quite understandable but it nevertheless was a 'puzzle'¹⁰⁰ to individual Catholics who were involved with MRA in the immediate post-war period.

a) International HQ of MRA in Switzerland

Garth Lean records that these conclusions "took nearly two decades to reverse."¹⁰⁰ There is no published evidence that the decisions of the Holy Office regarding MRA have ever been reversed.¹⁰¹ What is evident, however, is that individual Catholics remained unconditionally committed to MRA despite the best advice of their Church. The Holy Office's warning was quite unambiguous:

1. It is not proper that priests of the diocesan or regular clergy, or a *fortiori*, religious women, should take part in meetings of Moral Re-Armament.
2. If special circumstances render such participation desirable, let permission be asked in advance of the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office, it will be granted only to learned and experienced priests.
3. Finally, it is not proper for the faithful to accept any office of responsibility in the Moral Re-Armament movement, and much less to take part in the so-called 'policy teams'.¹⁰²

It was, apparently, misunderstood at the time that MRA was a secret society with a hierarchy. Information to this effect was probably fed to the Vatican by a communist agent.^{103 104} It is ironic, therefore, that while this was not true in the early 1950's, when Buchman ruled with a rod of iron, MRA has indeed evolved into a hierarchical organisation with a Council of Management which meets behind closed doors. Other elements of the 'seven grades'¹⁰⁵ exist in the central team, the local teams, full time workers, adherents who plough money into the work and those on the fringes who support the work through magazine subscriptions and attendance at public meetings.

The man who was largely credited with putting in a good word for MRA at the Vatican was Cardinal Tisserant. He has been described as "one of Buchman's keenest sympathisers".¹⁰⁶ In the light of history, Tisserant appears somewhat opportunistic and he impressed upon the newly elected Pope John XXIII his view of MRA. In particular he cited a case of Hindu-Catholic unity in its favour.¹⁰⁷ Tisserant is of more than passing interest since he was instrumental in negotiating the 1962 Rome-Moscow Agreement whereby the Vatican agreed not to allow criticism of Communism during the deliberations of the Second Vatican Council.¹⁰⁸

Paradoxically, an attempt to clear his name further confirmed "the existence and the contents of the Agreement"¹⁰⁹ and described how, during the Second Vatican Council "whenever a Bishop wished to touch on the question of Communism, the Cardinal intervened....to recall the order of silence."¹¹⁰

Naturally, the 'ecumenical spirit'¹¹¹ of the Second Vatican Council is lauded as a step forward in relations between Rome and MRA. It has been amply demonstrated, however, that the Second Vatican Council, while proclaiming many sound points of Catholic doctrine, produced sufficient ambiguities for its proceedings to be mercilessly exploited by neo-modernist forces both inside and outside of the Church.¹¹²

Whilst he admitted that a 'misunderstanding' had arisen between MRA and the Vatican due to misinformation¹⁰³ it is hard to believe a claim that Cardinal Ottaviani, a bastion of Catholic orthodoxy,¹³⁴ had been "won over by the breadth of this work of reconciliation and of practical ecumenism"¹¹⁴ on the strength of viewing MRA films.

The lay Catholic given the major responsibility for negotiating with the Vatican, over its position vis a vis MRA, was Michel Sentis.¹⁰³ He first met MRA in 1947 and wholeheartedly committed himself to working with Buchman and his team.¹¹⁵ There is no evidence, in Sentis' own writings, of any recourse to the traditional teaching of the Church in his decision to go with MRA. Instead, what led to his commitment was his own realisation that "what needed to be born in me had to come from inside myself, from the consciousness of my personal mission in the world."¹¹⁵ Admitting that he and Buchman came from different theological backgrounds he says "the divergence of our views did not alter the profound convergence of our commitments."¹¹⁵ Without blushing he claims that Jesus' words to Simon "Peter, thou art the rock...." were addressed to us as individuals. This evidence of how MRA can influence the Catholic mind has parallels with the current subversive ecumenical movement. There is a concerted effort to fragment the One True Church. This involves encouraging national hierarchies to assert their independence from a remote and dictatorial Rome - the ultimate development of which would result in each man being his own Pope - the very essence of the Reformation.

Sentis co-wrote a book with the protestant C. Piguet on "Experiments with Moral Re-Armament."¹¹⁶ This book contains some gems of ecumania. A chapter entitled 'Faiths' is particularly revealing: Citing a Buddhist and a Moslem respectively the authors stated that *"the question of belief or non-belief in God no longer had any relevance"*¹¹⁷ and *"we must not forget that the principles we share are the outcome of a larger body of teachings, which vary in number and in importance from one religion to another."*¹¹⁸

In addition, *"What the men and women of MRA have in common is not common ground, but that they are moving forward together, with the same wind propelling them in the same direction"*¹¹⁹ and *"if people could not all have the same being they could have the same becoming"*¹¹⁹ The parting shot, in this particular section of the book is that we must *"come out of our religious ghettos"*¹²⁰ which, in this case presumably means abandoning the Magisterium of the Church in favour of the higher wisdom of MRA.

PRESENT SITUATION

Whatever the truth is regarding the change of heart by Cardinal Ottaviani towards MRA it is a fact that one of those who 'hotly opposed'¹²¹ his efforts to maintain orthodoxy in the Second Vatican Council, Cardinal Koenig former Archbishop of Vienna, is now one of the foremost exponents of MRA in the world. His services on behalf of MRA include a foreword to "The World at the Turning",¹¹⁶ being quoted in the biography of Frank Buchman,¹²² speeches at Caux,^{123 124} the Westminster Theatre,¹²⁵ in Boston^{126 127} and the introduction of fellow Catholic dignitaries in Caux.¹²⁸ His speeches have been published by MRA in their British newspaper,¹²⁵ in booklet form¹²⁹ and in the Sino-American Journal¹³⁰ a publication with MRA connections.

When we asked the late Hamish Fraser¹³¹ for his opinion of Cardinal Koenig his immediate reaction was to describe him as a 'left-winger'.¹³² In fact, the Cardinal is a liberal¹³³ left-winger who, in response to the 'litmus test' encyclical Humanae Vitae,¹³⁴ took a 'liberal approach' leaving it *"up to the family to decide on contraception."* On the readmission of divorced and remarried couples to the sacraments Koenig believes *"that all doors should be kept open."*¹³⁵

Naturally, his liberal approach to the authentic teaching of the Catholic Church is reflected in his attitude towards Communism. He is a frequent traveller to Communist countries and has undertaken trips to Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia¹³⁶ and China.¹³⁷ He attributed his interest in Eastern Europe to Pope John XXIII who asked him to visit the imprisoned Cardinal Mindszenty.¹³⁶ The horrendous evidence of what happened to Cardinal Mindszenty¹³⁸ does not appear to have impressed upon Cardinal Koenig the impossibility of pursuing 'dialogue', with Communists. He masterfully exploits the "new era of ecumenism, which Vatican II opened"¹³⁹ and the globe-trotting exploits of Pope John Paul II¹³⁹ to support his own activities and readily sings the praises of MRA in his speeches.

According to the Cardinal *"It would be naive to count on a conversion of the communist countries."*¹⁴⁰ It would appear, therefore, that the Cardinal disregards Our Lady's requests at Fatima, which, if met, will lead to the conversion of Russia and an ensuing period of world peace.¹⁴¹ 'Dialogue is obviously the replacement for devotion to the Virgin Mary and the Cardinal does not mention her in any of his speeches to MRA audiences. He also believes that *"the important thing is to consider a way of evolution possible on both sides. Talks and dialogue are one element. That means continual negotiations as between equal partners."*¹⁴⁰ One must demand what he means by 'equal'. Does he mean that all Western political ideologies are now to be regarded on a par with intrinsically evil communism? How does the West 'evolve' in terms of Communism - by compromise? Totally avoiding the irreconcilability of Christianity and Communism¹⁴² the Cardinal told an MRA audience *"For Christians there can be no 'irreconcilable battle' between the two great camps of Eastern and Western Europe."*¹²⁵ He advocated Christian unity between East and West¹²⁵ despite the fact that the Russian Orthodox Church has long been a tool of the Soviet State. He clearly makes no distinction between Christians and 'Christian' apparatchiks in the East. The strategy of uniting Christian Churches of East and West is a key tactic in the subversive strategy of the British Council of Churches.¹⁴⁶

Cardinal Koenig is well connected in the ecumenical 'peace' movement. He is currently the International President of Pax Christi.

The Annual Report of the British Section for 1985/86¹⁴⁴ is liberally scattered with his quotes, made at the Pax Christi International Council in Vincenza in 1986. The exploits of Pax Christi in Britain are monitored closely by MI5 and organisations such as Families for Defence.¹⁴⁵

Wholly in line with and perhaps a source of motivation for Cardinal Koenig's left-wing liberalism and involvement with MRA is his membership of the steering committee of the Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival.¹⁴⁶ This illustrious group was formed prior to the disastrous fiasco at Assisi¹⁴⁷. The Global Forum, however, is intent on capitalising on the interfaith spirit created at Assisi. In joining this group the Cardinal is putting his head together with population controllers, communist sympathisers, Russian politburo members and, ultimately, with the Global One World anti-Christian crusaders whose main target for destruction is the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. An interesting diversion, regarding the Global Forum, is the revelation in its journal 'Shared Vision' that the World Wildlife Fund had a hand in financing Assisi.¹⁴⁶ The World Wildlife Fund (now called the Worldwide Fund for Nature) is patronised by Prince Philip, who has used its meetings to promote contraception, and by Armand Hammer, a known communist sympathiser¹⁴⁸ (and multi-millionaire) who has long standing links with the current Soviet leadership.¹⁴⁹ The Global Forum met at Oxford in April 1988. Three members of the Supreme Soviet attended¹⁴⁶ and the conference was addressed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Dalai Lama, and Mother Teresa whose expressed views on abortion must have seemed incongruous at this gathering.¹⁵⁰ The meeting was also addressed by Takeo Fukuda, a member of the conspiratorial Trilateral Commission.¹⁵¹ The Trilateral Commission, and its blood brother The Round Table, are of more than passing interest to the present consideration of MRA, as will be discussed below.

It is difficult to gauge the influence of MRA on the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, it is clear that it is being used as a vehicle for those elements within the Church which have abandoned traditional teaching and now follow the ways of the world. In a similar vein it is a reliable, although unpublished, fact that MRA has been used as a cover for various communist agents in different parts of the world and, in the case of Zimbabwe, for agents

of both sides of the pre-independence struggle.¹⁵² However, from current literature, it is possible to ascertain that an increasing number of Catholic clergy are becoming entangled in the MRA web.

As long ago as 1955 'Statements by Christian Leaders',¹⁵³ on the subject of MRA, were collected. Naturally, only those favourable to the movement were published. These included some Catholic clergy and laymen. However, in common with other such efforts, MRA was not being judged in the light of the traditional teaching of the church but in the light of personal experience. MRA has always been keen to present its 'acceptable face' to the Christian Churches and, particularly, to the Catholic Church. Normally, those chosen for this task have been lay Catholics who have been influenced by MRA. Invariably the Church is judged in the light of MRA rather than vice versa. A fine example of this published in 1965¹⁵⁴ was written by a Catholic who felt that the Catholic Church "does not seem to be a safe defence against Communist take-over."¹⁵⁵ Rather than advocate restoration of traditional teaching and action by the Church concerning Communism he declared that "something new is needed"¹⁵⁵ - i.e. MRA. To highlight his confusion over the role of the Church the same author stated "Those who fight explicitly for the traditional interests of the Church, and leave the fight for mankind's spirituality and for religion to non-Catholics, make a grave mistake."¹⁵⁶ While there may be narrow-minded elements among traditional Catholics who give no consideration to the temporal order, the author cited above completely avoids mentioning that it is only through the restoration of the 'traditional interests' of the Church that Communism can be effectively combated.

In the past, Cardinals have written favourable forewords to MRA publications^{154 157} but in the case of Cardinal Cushing of Boston it was clearly out of personal respect for Peter Howard. Also, as has been previously emphasised, significant, but subtle, changes have taken place within MRA over the last two decades.

Catholic dignitaries introduced to Caux by Cardinal Koenig were Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, President of the Justice and Peace Commission, the Catholic Bishop of Fribourg, Lausanne and Geneva and the Papal Nuncio from Geneva.¹²⁸ Etchegaray obviously made quite an impression as a prayer he delivered

at Caux was published inside the MRA Christmas Card from Tirley Garth in 1987. The Papal Nuncio also attended the Industrial Round Table¹⁵⁸ at Caux and the local Catholic priest has attended the New Year conference.¹⁵⁹

At least two Jesuits have connections with MRA. John Lucal SJ has attended and addressed the Caux Industrial Conference¹⁶⁰ and another Jesuit gave a highly favourable review of the biography of Frank Buchman.¹⁶¹ Cardinal Sin, Archbishop of Manila, also seems to associate himself with the MRA¹⁶² and there has been a Dominican presence at Caux over the years.²²

The Catholic writer, Mary Craig, has already been mentioned concerning her contribution to an MRA youth training session. She is an excellent example of the kind of Catholic with whom MRA maintains contact. While her heroic efforts with two handicapped children and excellent qualities as a writer have not gone unnoticed by the present author, her Catholicism, by her own admission, is far from orthodox let alone traditional. She finds communion on the tongue repulsive,¹⁶³ casts doubt on the validity of Catholic teaching on contraception¹⁶⁴ and has dispensed with the Sacrament of Confession.¹⁶⁵

GLOBAL SYNCRETISM

That MRA is a syncretic movement is irrefutable. This syncretism is not a contemporary deviation or merely a well-developed offshoot; it began with Buchman and has rapidly become the *raison d'être* of the movement. In the 1950's Buchman was training his team to "talk about moral and spiritual change in terms which the non - or anti-Christian could understand, and not to place any doctrinal obstacles in their way."¹⁶⁶ More explicitly, he put it thus "MRA is the good road of an ideology inspired by God upon which all can unite: Catholic, Jew and Protestant, Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist and Confucianist - all find they can change, where needed, and travel along this good road together."¹⁶⁷ In fact, Buchman was anti-doctrine, since he also advised his team to "speak right up to, but never beyond your experience."¹⁶⁸ The resulting move, in MRA, away from an overtly Christian standpoint was noticed by diverse observers. Even the rampant homosexual and double agent Tom Driberg astutely commented "What had begun primarily as a Christian evangelistic movement of a familiar

American kind had been transformed into a primarily ideological crusade."¹⁶⁹ More recently, a born again Christian who made a return visit to Caux after many years absence, said "The movement seemed to have deteriorated by a long stretch since Frank Buchman founded it as the Oxford Group upon his conversion at the Keswick Convention."¹⁷⁰ Whatever changes were wrought within MRA by Buchman, there was little opposition since "No Church claimed his obedience, no priest heard his confession, no associate countered his judgement."¹⁷¹

The fruits of Buchman's syncretism were quick to emerge in MRA publications. In 1954 a leading Thai Buddhist monk remarked "I think always about the unity of the world. If we want to build a new world, unity must come first. How do we create it? I didn't find the answer until I found MRA."¹⁷² In 1959 the Lord Abbot of Thailand visited Caux and the published report of his time in Europe made much of his presence at an audience with Pope Pius XII. Under the influence of MRA the Lord Abbot told the Pope "I believe that all the great faiths have the same objective and though we have different ways of practising our faith, we should work together for world peace."¹⁷³

Currently, syncretism is high on the agenda of MRA activities. The Dalai Lama has visited the MRA centre at Caux and his words to the assembly there were given centre page status in the British MRA newspaper.¹⁷⁴ During his recent visit to the United Kingdom to attend the Global Forum, his first appointment was a meeting with MRA workers in London.¹⁷⁵ Further afield, particularly in India, the interfaith line is avidly pursued. A meeting of health workers at the MRA centre in Panchgani in January 1987 resulted in a report in which neither Christ nor God was mentioned, even by the Christians present who purported to share spiritual experience. One Christian participant spoke of "daily listening to the inner voice."¹⁷⁶ Far from putting up doctrinal obstacles the Christians appear to be adopting Hindu phraseology. On receiving this report I raised objections, with the participant who sent it to me, on the basis of its syncretism. In reply I received a copy of a letter (from another MRA adherent, working in Saudi Arabia, who professes to be a Christian) two quotations from which require no additional comment: "I kept the Ramadan fast for one full month."

It is a very refreshing experience. There is fresh vitality and ineffable peace and joy in my heart."¹⁷⁷ In answer to his daughter, who asked why he was observing Ramadan, the writer replied "God is one and He is not compartmentalised as Hindu, Christian or Muslim. He can be worshipped in any manner one chooses. He can be worshipped and sought in any way; in many ways so long as the desire to seek Him is sincere. I am free to worship Him and seek Him in any way, anywhere, anytime - everywhere at all times."¹⁷⁷ Of course, such notions as the above detract from true Christian worship and normally mean that God is not sought at all. That would appear to be the message from a recent British MRA newsletter which approvingly quoted "We must express the idea of God's guidance, without being religious."¹⁷⁸

There are striking parallels between MRA and that most syncretic of world brotherhoods, the Freemasons. In fact, it is very hard to see how the duties of an MRA worker differ from those charges of a Freemason concerning God and Religion viz. that, "A mason is obliged, by his tenure, to obey the moral law, and if he rightly understands the art he will never be a stupid atheist nor an irreligious libertine. He, of all men, should best understand that God Seeth not as men seeth, for men looketh at the outward appearance but God looketh to the heart. A mason is, therefore, particularly bound never to act against the dictates of his conscience. Let a man's religion or mode of worship be what it may, he is not excluded from the order, provided he believes in the glorious architect of heaven and earth; and practice the sacred duties of morality. Masons unite with the virtuous of every persuasion in the firm and pleasing bond of fraternal love; they are taught to view the errors of mankind with compassion, and to strive by the purity of their conduct, to demonstrate the superior excellence of the faith they may profess. Thus masonry is the centre of union between good men and true, and the happy means of conciliating friendship amongst those who must otherwise have remained at a perpetual distance."¹⁷⁹

In this light, therefore, it is hardly surprising that MRA finds itself increasingly becoming an extension to the global network of One World movements. All these movements are Masonic in essence and de facto.¹⁸⁰ One prime example is The Round Table with which MRA has firm links.

At the end of the summer session at Caux a confidential meeting of leading statesmen, industrialists and MRA workers takes place with representatives from Japan, the United States and Europe under the auspices of The Round Table. A talk delivered at one of these sessions entitled 'Global Concept on the line of MRA Movement'¹⁸¹ reveals how involved in Globalism MRA is. In this talk the author discussed a meeting of the Global Infrastructure Fund which took place at Caux in the late 1970's and also the transition 'From Internationalism to Globalism'.¹⁸¹ Further Round Table Conferences have taken place at Caux¹⁸² and it is revealed in a Newsletter that these sessions were initiated by Frits Philips,¹⁸³ a leading Dutch industrialist, former head of the multinational electronics company Philips and long standing adherent of MRA.^{184 185} On the Trilateral front Andrew Young of Atlanta, a member of the Commission, addressed the opening banquet of an MRA Conference in 1987.¹⁸⁶

CONCLUSION

It is not the affirmations of MRA which make it dangerous to Catholics and attractive to the forces of organised syncretism. Rather, like all heresies such as Protestantism and Pantheism its error arises from its 'diminutions and negations'.¹⁸⁷ The best way to refute an error is to "make manifest the profound truth it disfigures and fails to grasp in its fulness."¹⁸⁸ In this context the words of Pope Pius XI in his encyclical Mortalium Animos should clarify the situation for any concerned Catholic: "Never perhaps in the past have the minds of men been so engrossed as they are today with the desire to strengthen and extend for the common good of mankind that tie of brotherhood - which binds us all closely together. The world does not yet fully enjoy the fruits of peace; on the contrary, dissensions old and new in various lands still issue in rebellions and conflict. Such disputes, affecting the tranquil prosperity of nations, can never be settled without the combined and active goodwill of those who are responsible for their government, and hence it is easy to understand - especially now that, the unity of mankind is no longer called into question - the widespread desire that all nations, in view of the universal kingship, should daily find closer union with one another."

It is with similar motive that efforts are being made by some in connection with the New Law promulgated by Christ Our Lord. Assured that there exist few men who are entirely devoid of religious sense, they seem to ground on this belief a hope that all nations, while differing indeed in religious matters, may yet without great difficulty be brought to fraternal agreement on certain points of doctrine which will form a common basis of the spiritual life. With this object, congresses, meetings and addresses are arranged, attended by a large concourse of hearers, where all without distinction, unbelievers of every kind as well as Christians, even those who unhappily have rejected Christ and denied His divine nature or mission, are invited to join in the discussion. Now, such efforts can meet with no kind of approval among Catholics. They presuppose the erroneous view that all religions are more or less good and praiseworthy, inasmuch as all give expression, under various forms, to that innate sense which leads men to God and to the obedient acknowledgement of His rule. Those who hold such a view are not only in error; they distort the true idea of religion, and thus reject, falling gradually into naturalism and atheism. To favour this opinion, therefore, and to encourage such undertakings is tantamount to abandoning the religion revealed by God.

These pan-Christians who strive for the union of the Churches would appear to pursue the noblest of ideals in promoting charity among all Christians. But how should charity tend to the detriment of faith?.....since the foundation of charity is faith pure and inviolate, it is chiefly by the bond of one faith that the disciples of Christ are to be united. A federation of Christians, then, is inconceivable in which each member retains his own opinions and private judgement in matters of faith, even though they differ from the opinions of all the rest. How can men with opposite convictions belong to one and the same federation of the faithful; those who accept sacred Tradition as a source of revelation and those who reject it; those who recognise as divinely constituted the hierarchy of bishops, priests and ministers in the Church, and those who regard it as gradually introduced to suit the conditions of the time; those who adore Christ really present in the Most Holy Eucharist through that wonderful conversion of the bread and wine, transubstantiation and those who assert that the body of Christ is there only by faith or by the signification and virtue of the sacrament; those

who in the Eucharist recognise both sacrament and sacrifice, and those who say that it is nothing more than the memorial of the Lord's Supper; those who think it right and useful to pray to the Saints reigning with Christ, especially to Mary the Mother of God, and to venerate their images, and those who refuse such veneration as derogatory to the honour due to Jesus Christ....How so great a variety of opinions can clear the way for the unity of the Church, we know not.

Thus, Venerable Brethren, it is clear why this Apostolic See has never allowed its subjects to take part in the assemblies of non-Catholics. There is but one way in which the unity of Christians may be fostered, and that is by furthering the return to the one true Church of Christ of those who are separated from it; for far from that one true Church they have in the past fallen away. The one Church of Christ is visible to all, and will remain, according to the will of its Author, exactly the same as He instituted it.

Let our separated children, therefore draw nigh to the Apostolic See set up in the City which Peter and Paul, Princes of the Apostles, Consecrated with their blood; to the See which 'the root and womb whence issues the Church of God'; and let them come, not with any intention nor hope that 'the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth', will cast aside the integrity of the faith and tolerate their errors, but to submit themselves to its teaching and government."¹⁸⁹

Mater Christi, ora pro nobis.

Roger Watson.

(Dr. Watson and his wife were members of M.R.A. from 1982 until 1987. He was a full-time worker for M.R.A. for 1½ years during that period. He was received into the Catholic Church on Pentecost 1987 and is a regular contributor to Apropos - Ed.)

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